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The Sober Serenity of Faith

IN the statement outlining the editorial policy of *Christianity and Crisis*, printed in the issue of December 9, there is this sentence: "Such a faith will induce a kind of sober serenity which saves men from bitterness, despair and bewilderment." As the days turn into the New Year, we can have no greater wish, for ourselves and for all men, than that we shall have this sober serenity.

The world of relationships can be fearfully destroyed by bitterness, despair and bewilderment long before the final blows from the instruments used to express these moods. To those who hold the Christian faith, both timeless in its essence and immediate in its imperatives, bitterness, despair and bewilderment are the very antithesis of the faith which we profess. Yet so common to all mankind are these experiences of frustration and hopelessness in these days of our testing that we can no longer attribute them only to those who follow some lesser leading; they find rootage in our own lives as Christians.

In uneasiness of mind, we find all sorts of reasons for the terrifying figures on the delinquency of youth, the high divorce rate. But attempts to press the family pattern back into the old lines is little more than patch work. Nor will it be enough to set up elaborate systems of personal counseling—as though the blind could lead the blind.

The distortions in the lives of individuals come from deep social maladjustments. Our own dismays and despairs as Christians derive from our bitter knowledge of this fact, our harried attempts to find some solution this side of the radical. We know, too, that it will not suffice to preach or teach the Christian philosophy of life. Those who do not hold this faith cannot be appeased by words about a life which is so faint-heartedly demonstrated.

This nation may already be living through an act in a great tragedy, unaware that it is a tragic people. We have power, and do not know how to use it. We do not know how to use this power because we cannot make a picture of the kind of world that we want to live in. Without imagination, the people perish. We are living in tragedy because we cannot house in our imagination all that we know, in detail, about the sufferings of hundreds of thousands, millions of people around the world. In poverty of imagination

we think of piecemeal solutions to problems calling for world-wide adjustments of our economic and social structures. The great American tragedy is not that we turn away from these solutions in selfish isolationism, but that we have not yet imagined what they could be.

How many of us have lived through discussions of interracial relationships in which some more daring member of the minority group has tried to say what racial discrimination means to a person caught in its toils. For a moment we saw it plain, but only for a moment, not long enough to imagine what it would mean to that person if he were to be released from a system in the power of the majority to revoke.

As we enter this new year, eager to live it fully, to be aware of the astounding novelty of a world struggling to be one, and to play our part in this struggle, we pray for sober serenity. If it is to be the sober serenity of the Christian, we shall not find it in the closed garden of quietism. If the play is to be a tragedy, let us at least savor the essence of it. And it will be a tragedy, for as individuals and as a nation we shall fall short of our high calling.

There are as many definings of this sober serenity of the Christian as the number of those who seek to define it. We can only say to each other what is for us the most life-filled road to true serenity of spirit.

What would happen to us as individuals, and to those corporate expressions of human life and activity to which we belong, if we really believed that the redemptive processes of God were actually going on—now and continuously through all eternity? And, believing this, we would have to go on to believe that each one of God's creatures was an indispensable part in this redemptive process, that God had not chosen a selected few, but that his purposes must flow through the lives of all people. Then all the people must be released from those bondages which now make it impossible for them to be free channels of the redemptive processes of God.

It would be hard to hold this belief and to live up to it, but it may be that only through some such holy act of imagination can we, in all humility, hope to possess the sober serenity called for in these days.

R. E. McC.

On the Political and Religious Struggle in the Netherlands

W. BANNING

IT is my purpose to say a few things about the spiritual struggle now being waged in certain sections of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands—a struggle for a new vision in social and religious problems, and toward new life and new forms of living. The reader should bear in mind that this struggle is still raging and its outcome is far from being settled.

I will begin with the political and social aspects. During the last 50 years political life in the Netherlands has been dominated by a so-called antithesis line of policy based on the idea that a Christian should belong to some Christian political party or other, and that he cannot and must not have any dealings with non-Christians, since there is no such intercourse in confession. Hence we saw in the Netherlands three large parties whose principles were based on a confession: the Roman Catholic party, the anti-revolutionary party (supporting the Reformed Churches), the Christian Historical party (supporting the orthodox group of the Dutch Reformed Church). The origin of these parties must be sought in their opposition in principle to the French Revolution and liberalism, later also to socialism and the struggle for emancipation on the part of some sections of the church. These parties are to a large extent dominated by the theology and culture-philosophy of the Neo-Calvinists (Dr. A. Kuyper), who, on the ground of a special view concerning particular and general grace, advocated the introduction of Christianity into politics, and a Christian science and art; who fought for the founding of denominational schools (even up to their own universities), Christian hospitals, Christian recreation, and Christian trade-unions. This had two results. On the one hand, a strong self-consciousness was developed in these groups, so much so, that since 1918 they have been in power in the Dutch government. On the other hand, that portion of the people calling themselves Christians have become more and more isolated from the rest of the people, giving rise to a great gulf, to malice and hatred.

Whoever tries to look the situation squarely in the face must admit that this antithesis-idea has really and practically thrown up a dam against secularism and de-Christianization, yet on the other hand it has brought about hostility against and estrangement from Christianity. Especially during the peri-

od between the wars did Christian politics begin to be tinged more and more with capitalistic conservatism. There were, it is true, both in the Roman Catholic and Protestant parties, a few figures who stood out for radical progressive policy and in particular identified themselves with the demands of labor, but they remained solitary figures and failed tragically; the conservatives took the lead. This was one of the reasons why numerous working people went over to socialism and left the church at the same time, the more hot-headed ones becoming atheists. In Holland we were faced with this contrast: Christian politics is conservatism; a progressive policy is anti-Christian. Theoretical arguments that this need not be so at all were of no avail. This contrast continued to live on, deeply rooted in the consciousness of the nation.

Even before the second world-war resistance to this miserable state of things came from Protestant circles. A group of adherents led by our present very able minister of finance, Prof. Liefstink, strove for a radical social policy resembling very closely the policy of the social-democrats, especially when unemployment was so rampant in our midst. Within social democracy itself, the influence of a group of religious socialists became more and more felt, a group that was critical of Marxism soon made room for religious motivation of a socialistic conviction. Mutual discussions took place among members of both camps, which made the falseness of the already developed political relations more and more deeply felt.

Then came the second world-war and the occupation. People of widely different religious persuasions discovered each other in the resistance movement, in "illegality," in prison and in the concentration camp. It was found by experience that men could fight the common foe, national-socialism, better in close comradeship, collectively. Would they not be able to do the same after a while when the liberation came, to do the same in respect to conservative capitalistic policies? It came to be seen that character, courage, readiness to give one's life was more significant, made closer ties than theories and dogmas, Christian or anti-Christian. There arose in anticipation, a vision, a will that the new Netherlands, after her liberation, should be a different one from the old one of before 1940, and this new

Holland would have to be built upon a combined effort exerted by those who had found each other. It would be epitomized in the idea: Necessary above all things is a renewal, a "break-through" of the old political fetters, of the antithesis idea.

After the liberation this idea began to take shape in a Dutch national movement. It was the convergence of two currents: one having its source in a camp for hostages and the other from the "illegality" centering around the journal "Je Maintiendrai". In each group there were social democrats, Protestants, Catholics, and persons who, until 1940, had stood aloof to party politics on account of the illusionary dividing line in the world of politics. The idea that accompanied this break-through was positively charged with the slogan: for a personalistic socialism. This idea was brought to the fore in order to emphasize that the people of Holland were neither individualistic, nor collectivistic, nor Marxist, but wished to realize a type of socialism in which respect for the human being should form the essence. People felt themselves in this way to be closely bound with spiritual ties in other countries (the personalism in France, the personalistic socialism of Berdjajew) and with the best traditions of European civilization.

In the world of politics the idea of the break-through was initially attended with success in the founding of the Dutch Labor Party, emphatically intended to be a new start, a new page in the history of socialism. It comprises the old social-democratic party, the old liberal-radical party, and a small Christian democratic party (a group of orthodox Protestants, who broke with the antithesis parties, and a group of Roman Catholics, who broke away from the old Roman Catholic party). The new party acknowledges the inner bonds between their religious convictions just as much as they reject the old antithesis. It cannot be averred that the new party dominated Dutch politics at the moment—even if it is one of the two government parties—but it does affirm that the politics of the antithesis is a thing of the past, and that the founding of a new party spells release for countless numbers of people.

In the meantime, the depth and significance of the struggle that is now going on in this country is not equally clear to everyone. The old social-democrats cannot be blamed for paying special attention to political motives. The Protestants, especially the theologians among them, know that the whole question centers around a theological-religious struggle where much more is involved than mere politics, viz: the Neo-Calvinistic vision of a Christian culture which is closely connected with the meaning of the Church, her relations with society and social and political problems. For this reason the spiritual conflict in the Dutch Reformed Church must be the subject of a separate discussion. It is to a large extent also a

struggle of her own, unconnected with the Labor Party and must be judged on her own *religious* motives.

II

The Dutch Reformed Church, to which almost one third of the Dutch people belong, was, until the second world-war, characterized by three phenomena, around which, now, after the war, the struggle has begun. In the first place: the parties in the church itself, which for the greater part at least were organized into fairly strong organizations who oft-times quarreled violently and pitilessly among themselves. There were in the main, four different schools of thought: the fundamentalists, the confessionalists, the moderate orthodox section, and the liberal minded group. In the second place: the dominant bourgeois-minded elements in the church; the intellectuals have for the most part left her; the working-people turned their backs on her; in some parts of the country even the farmers were lost to her; a large proportion of the younger people took no heed of her. She had degenerated into a secluded society not to be moved by the alarming nature of the social and political evils of society at large. She never voiced her opinion about these evils and failed to give a lead to the conscience of the nation. In the third place: the organization of the church councils were preponderantly technical-administrative. The Synod, as part of the church order of 1816, was much more an administrative than a spiritual organ; it was not able to give spiritual leadership; it could not accept the task of spiritual decisions as legally imposed upon it. In the various groups of the church, there was, it is true, albeit from different motives, a revolt against this state of affairs, but this, principally on account of the strife among the different sects within the church, proved futile. The last unsuccessful attempt to bring about a reorganization in the Church dates back from 1938.

The war and the occupation marked a turning point. I shall refrain from mentioning any other names in this article, but it would be unjust if I failed to make mention of Dr. Gravemeyer, secretary to the Synod since April, 1940, and Prof. Kraemer, of international fame in the missionary cause, as the leading lights in the new revival movement in the Church. They found, God be praised, supporters in every group and school of thought. War and occupation had a remarkable effect on the Church and her leadership. First, the conflict with national-socialism, an ideology diametrically opposed to the Gospel of Christ. Second, the responsibility for the whole of the Dutch people in their oppression and resistance had to be taken on by the Church; again, not on political grounds but on religious, because the Church with her divine duty to perform, cannot but proclaim: "Land, land, land, hear ye the word of the Lord." This responsibility for the *whole* na-

tion was clearly demonstrated in the famine-winters of 1944-45 when, under the guidance of the Church, help and food supplies were organized in aid of the starving, especially in the cities in the west of the country.

I have mentioned here two series of facts: the degeneration of the Church prior to 1940, and the effects of war and occupation. Both of them made us search deeper into the causes of this decay and to the conditions that would bring about a genuine revival. This coming to one's self as it were, this coming to one's senses, has given rise to a movement to bring about a renewal in Christian life in church congregations. This simple but fundamental question, this direct and burning question, must be put to the conscience of every member of the church, of all parties, persons and organs: Do we know, or realize, what it means now, during war-time and occupation of national socialists to be a member of the Church of Christ? It must be discovered anew that the Church, because she has been founded by God, has a holy charge, a divine commission, both for herself and for the world at large. It is indeed with a deep sense of shame, but at the same time a veritable deliverance, that we cannot but discover from this fundamental question that a radical criticism of the existing church must follow in its wake: of her dissensions due to internal strife; of her bourgeois-spirit and narrow-mindedness and of her purely secular organization. Hence there was a religious storm a-brewing all along the line, although it could not develop in its full fury during the occupation; a storm or struggle which might also be termed a break-through into the rigid sectarianism, the bourgeois spirit, the intolerable methods of administration and organization; above all things a break-through towards the living wells from which flows the Christian life of the Church: the apostolic witness of the New Testament—obedience to the Lord Christ (Christos Kurios).

The first results are already visible. The church-order of 1816 has been abolished. A new General Synod met on 31st Oct., 1945, in the Nieuwe Kerk in Amsterdam (the national church edifice par excellence) having as its first task the preparation of an entirely new Church order.

This may sound very much like business, but when one bears in mind the fact that the proposal for this new General Synod was accepted with only two dissenting votes out of 64, we see at the same time that there is a breaking up of the old parties. Another result is the installation of a number of councils, who are occupying themselves with the problems of our youth, training and education, the inner mission, the press, commissions for evangelical work on broad lines and modern methods. Still another tangible result is that the church has been giving the lead in thinking and acting by her proclama-

tions of principles concerning capital punishment as affecting national socialists convicted for high-treason, concerning trade-unions, and concerning Indonesia. These and other signs are being brought more and more before the public mind, so that the vision is indeed becoming a real one, alive and vivid. Of these we will mention a few more fundamental characteristics.

In the first place, the church is learning anew the nature of her own essence and task, apostolically and prophetically: she wishes to become a professing national Church of Christ, all parties being called upon to give up their self-sufficiency by obedience to Christ Jesus. In the second place, she realizes on these grounds her responsibility also for the social and political problems, because the demands of the Gospel embrace all the different walks of life. She is trying in accordance to her charge to be a city set upon a hill, the light on a bushel, the conscience of society amidst the troubles of the world. In the third place, she is preparing herself for a great struggle extending over many years for the re-Christianization of the people of the Netherlands; to lead into the church the required number of workers needed for this purpose, by the foundation of an Academy "Kerk & Wereld" at Driebergen, which is to train its own type of religious workers in a world that has forgotten Christ.

In closing I may point out that behind all this revival movement in the church there is more than an urge to action. There is a deep religious feeling, characterized by a painful sense of guilt toward God for having neglected the true calling of the Church. I said there is a break-through in the various parties within the church herself. This applies only to those who are suffering under the collective sense of guilt and who are prepared to admit with the others: "we have fallen ill together and now we must see to it that we get well again together and change our lives together." Not until then can we get rid of all self-will, all exaltation of our own particular way of thinking, or our own particular theology. We are all collectively bound to obey Christ, the Lord of the Church Universal. Of a new theology—which might be compared to Barthianism—there is no question. Concentration on theology is not the most important thing, but concentration on Christ is the thing that is wanted, recognizing the fact that various theologies are able to interpret the saving grace that He has brought into the world, and likewise recognizing that a good or an excellent theology is not at all a guarantee of the genuineness of Christian living.

If I had to summarize the dominant motives in this revival, I should mention: 1.) The recognition of the authority of the Bible in announcing the undoubted goodness of God in the life and works, death and resurrection of Christ; 2.) The re-discovery of

the opostolate of the Church with her prophetic message of the kingdom of God and her readiness to serve (not to rule imperialistically); 3.) The necessity of a revival of the Reformation, the conversion of the Church and of Christians, which should proceed every attempt at converting non-Christians.

What is taking place in Holland, is most certainly

determined by the political and religious situation of the Dutch people, and yet it is not only of significance for one little nation; the struggle in which we are involved (and which is rousing strong opposition, not to mention endless misunderstandings) is but a part of the great world-wide struggle of the church in her entirety: how she can again truly and verily become the Church of Christ.

Church Union in Britain

MERVYN STOCKWOOD

THE sermon preached by Dr. Fisher in St. Mary's, Cambridge, in 1946, is likely to be as decisive as the one by John Keble in St. Mary's, Oxford, in 1833. For years there have been discussions on the problems of the reunion of the churches, and it is doubtful whether further points can be usefully made in the debating chamber. The same ground has been covered over and over again. The stumbling block is always the same, Episcopacy. Argument and counter-argument cannot remove it, and as it is inconceivable that the Anglican Church would ever dispense with it, many have recently begun to despair. But now the Archbishop has put forward a plan which may well resolve the difficulties. Its main points are two:

1. Although episcopacy may be defined differently and although the methods of administrative organization centering around it may vary, all denominations accepting the scheme will provide for episcopal ordination.
2. Although no minister in any existing denomination will be re-ordained, he will receive a further form of commissioning which will make his ministry acceptable in all parts of the Church.

These proposals may disappoint those who had hoped to see full organic unity in their life-time, but it cannot be denied that they mark a considerable advance, and it is difficult to see how they could go further at this stage. Their chief advantage is that Anglicans and Free Churchmen are put on an equal footing. While, for instance, Methodists will remain Methodists and Anglicans will remain Anglicans, yet their ministries will be interchangeable, and this will end the present unsatisfactory position which permits occasional equality of status in the pulpit but never at the altar.

No doubt these suggestions are likely to be misunderstood by those who are unfamiliar with the problems of Church unity because it may seem that their doctrinal implications have little to do with the Message of Jesus. That is probably correct, but it does not alter the fact that we have to deal with the situation as we find it. So far as the Church of England is concerned, the problem is complicated by

a unique legal set-up and an intricate historical tradition. And however much we may deplore them, these facts cannot be ignored when the authorities have to decide how Anglicanism can take its place within a larger ecclesiastical framework. The value of Dr. Fisher's scheme is that while it faces the problems, it provides a working arrangement which goes a long way towards overcoming the differences.

Moreover if I may be allowed to draw from my own limited experience, I am convinced that this scheme is the only one which is likely to prove successful. For six years I have taken part in an experiment of co-operation between the churches, and scarcely a day has gone by in which I have not been in consultation with a Free Church minister. Once a week we meet together at the parish church for Holy Communion, and then we have breakfast and a staff meeting, at which we plan our work as a single team for the whole district. The program is heavy. We run two youth centers, at which we cater to the needs of the young people in the locality. For those over eighteen there is a community house, where a well-balanced cultural and recreational diet is provided for adults. In addition we provide teachers for divinity instruction at the local State school, visiting chaplains for the factories, chairmen for discussion circles and committee meetings. Each month a joint paper is published, and in the summer, open-air brain trusts are held in the park.

As far as worship is concerned, we do not favor united services unless they meet a practical routine need. For instance, during an interregnum at a Methodist church, the Anglican clergy made themselves responsible for a number of Sundays. In the summer there is a fair amount of change, as it enables the single-handed ministers to get away for a holiday. The only exception to this procedure is that once in two months in the evening there is a communion service for the laity. From seventy to a hundred usually attend. It is held three times a year in an Anglican church, when it is conducted according to the Prayer Book; the Nonconformist ministers read the epistle and help with the administration, but they never celebrate. On the other occasions it takes place in a Free Church, when the

rite of the particular denomination is used, except that an Anglican priest always says the words of institution with the presiding minister. The weekly Eucharist at the parish church is, of course, the routine daily service, and the ministers are present as ordinary members of the congregations.

The experience of these six years has been valuable and instructive. The following points stand out:

- (1) The difficulties which concern the laity are very different from those which concern the clergy. The man in the pew shows little enthusiasm for episcopacy or non-episcopacy. He neither understands nor wishes to understand the points about which ecclesiastics negotiate, as they appear to him to be irrelevant. His objections to reunion are psychological and emotional. He is accustomed to a particular building and a particular form of worship; he has little desire for anything different. The Nonconformists dislike the "goings-on" at the parish church; while the Anglicans feel that the worship of the chapel is irreverent and unsatisfying. On occasions a special effort is made. For instance, the Nonconformists flock to the Midnight Mass at Christmas—perhaps the most advanced service of the year, when there is a maximum of ceremonial!
- (2) From the parson's point of view, the chief hindrance to unity is the man who has sat in one particular pew for many years, and whose vision of the Catholic Church is circumscribed by the walls of the building in which he worships. Not only is he incapable of understanding the passionate cry of Jesus that all his followers should be one, but he is afraid that if his church or chapel is merged into a larger unit, he may lose much of his importance as a pillar of his particular conventicle.
- (3) The younger people rarely identify themselves with a denomination for doctrinal or intellectual reasons. They go to the parish church or to the Methodist chapel because their parents or their friends go. If marriage demands a change, a change is usually made—though, admittedly, the Anglican church is usually the gainer.
- (4) Prejudices are overcome not so much by services or by committees, but by co-operation in practical affairs. Until this experiment was started, the congregations were largely unknown to one another. Now they are constantly meeting for social and educational purposes, with the result that when an Anglican thinks of the local Methodist church, he at once thinks of people whom he knows and has grown to like—and that is three quarters of the battle.

From what I have written it will be realized that the Archbishop's suggestions will, if acted upon, be

an immense strengthening of our position. The different communities have been growing together for six years, and although we maintain our separate identities, there is, in some respects, 'one church' in the district. But we cannot plough fresh ground until the ministers find themselves on an equal footing. Once that has happened, it is likely that within three generations the denominations will be linked so closely that they will achieve organic unity.

What is true of the locality in which I work applies to many parts of Britain. During the past twenty-five years there has been a considerable amount of co-operation between the denominations, and it is no exaggeration to say that the radical change of outlook amounts to a revolution. Hence Dr. Fisher's proposals have met with a warm response and the next developments are eagerly awaited.

Opposition will, of course, come from the extreme Anglo-Catholic wing, but it is to be hoped that the authorities will not permit a small, though noisy, minority to hold up the Church to ransom.

It is high time that the bluff was called. These extremists represent nobody but themselves, and it is quite certain that the pontifical statements issued by the heads of the monastic orders on the subject of Church Unity would be disowned by an overwhelming majority of Anglicans. If there is to be a "show down," then the sooner we have it the better. My impression, for what it is worth, is that most Anglo-Catholics, certainly the laity, are faithful members of the Church of England and will follow the Archbishop's lead; a few will try to form a non-juring church, and a very few will go over to Rome. The sooner we part company the better because their pro-Roman attitude is utterly incompatible with the ethos of both Anglicanism and Nonconformity. It must be clearly understood that there is a world of difference between this faction and the great body of High Churchmen who, while jealous of their Catholic heritage, are anxious to hasten the day of Christian reunion. While they may have reservations about certain of Dr. Fisher's proposals, it is likely that they will give general assent to them, because they safeguard the doctrines about which they feel most deeply.

It is now the responsibility of the Free Churchmen to take the next steps. They need to realize that at this stage it is impossible for the Anglican Church to go further. She cannot dispense with the historic episcopate, but she is prepared to share it with those who would be glad to incorporate it into their system of Church governments. In return she sincerely desires her own life to be enriched by the contributions which are to be made to the common pool by the Free Church community.

It is a time for clear thinking and wise statesmanship; even more is it a time for spiritual vision and a thirst for souls.

The World Church: News and Notes

U. S. Churchmen Prepare for World Council Assembly

A hundred and sixty American churchmen are now engaged in furthering preparations for the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches scheduled to meet in Amsterdam in August, 1948, according to Dr. John C. Bennett, American secretary of the Council's Study Department.

Dr. Bennett, who has completed his assignment in Geneva as the representative of American churches making preparations for the 1948 Assembly, explained that the Assembly will be divided into four sections. Four commissions are now at work on a volume which will give the background for Assembly decisions in each field covered.

A second task completed by Dr. Bennett is the writing of a pamphlet entitled "Man's Disorder, God's Design," which will be the theme of the 1948 meeting. The pamphlet is now being published.

Dr. Bennett, who is professor of Christian Theology and Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, has recently returned to New York. (RNS)

York Prelate Urges Protection Of Christian Minorities

Concern over the future of Christian minorities in Egypt, Turkey, India, and other countries where strong nationalist agitation exists was expressed by Dr. Cyril Forster Garbett, Archbishop of York, in the House of Lords.

Dr. Garbett asked what steps the government is taking to secure adequate protection for minorities under existing and future agreements. He said such guarantees should be sought especially in countries where nationalism threatens to sweep away safeguards or where a process is under way "to create a state proletariat in which all citizens are molded in the same pattern."

"Religious minorities are exposed to special peril, particularly when their religion is associated with their race," he said. "Freedom is far more than freedom of worship and teaching within an actual building. That is only a small step toward full religious freedom, which must include the right to propagate religion or evangelize, as well as the right of individuals to accept or reject it, as an instructed conscience directs."

Reminding the House that under the Montreux convention of 1937 the Egyptian government will have full judicial authority over all foreigners after 1949, Dr. Garbett said it is doubtful whether ancient Christian churches in Egypt will continue to possess civil and religious rights in carrying on their work.

"In recent years," he asserted, "some ominous signs have appeared and various attempts have been made by the Egyptian government to restrict and interfere with these ancient churches and also with missionary work."

"There is also anxiety about the future in the independent states of India, where it has been made difficult for any subject of the state to change his religion."

Dr. Garbett said that during the war Turkey re-

stricted the freedom of the Greek Orthodox Church, and in Yugoslavia there is concern over the attitude of the government toward Roman Catholic minorities.

"It is doubtful," he continued, "whether there is much value in inserting clauses about religious and civil liberties in treaties. There is a danger that a nation or a large party in a nation will feel that such clauses are a sign of subjection to a stronger power and express some limitation of their own sovereignty. They are extremely difficult to enforce and it is generally recognized that it is impracticable to go to war about them."

"On the other hand, it would be of real value if a place were found in the proposed Charter or Bill of Rights for a declaration insisting on civil and religious liberties for individuals and minorities. This would express the standard to which civilized nations are expected to conform."

Replying on behalf of the government, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Jowitt, declared that "the government is not neutral in this matter, but is a protagonist for the cause." However, he added, the government feels that the protection of minorities "must be dependent on action of the United Nations in fulfilling relevant provisions of the Charter." (RNS)

Medical Work in China

On October 19 a meeting of missionary doctors was convened in Shanghai by the Council on Medical Missions. It was reported that 309 Christian hospitals and centers of medical work were now in operation, at least in name. Medical supplies are available in considerable quantities. The greatest need is for more Christian doctors and nurses, without whom hospitals and supplies are useless, for the purposes of establishing Christian institutions. Inquiries are being constantly received for more Chinese Christian doctors. There are less than 50 missionary doctors in China today. The available personnel is quite inadequate for the staffing of all the Christian hospitals and medical schools that existed before the war if their Christian character is to be maintained. It is suggested that a student volunteer movement would help to recruit young doctors for Christian service. Regional medical councils should advise on the planning of medical work in each area so as to use our resources to the best advantage.

The Council on Medical Missions has been asked to draw up a statement on policy to be presented to the forthcoming Biennial Meeting of the NCC and to the Boards in America, Europe and the British Dominions. Dr. Bernard Read of the Lester Institute of Medical Research, Shanghai, has been asked to act as Secretary for the CMM in the absence of Dr. T. S. Outerbridge, who is shortly going on furlough.

—Newsletter, National Christian Council of China.

World Council Reports On Relief Situation

As in the case of Denmark, five other former German-occupied countries in Europe—France, Belgium,

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Holland, Norway, and Czechoslovakia—are being rehabilitated and may soon become helping, rather than receiving, countries, according to Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn of the World Council of Churches.

Dr. Cockburn, director of the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid, spoke at the wind-up meeting of the Council's international reconstruction committee, which is being reorganized to constitute a new general committee on church reconstruction, composed of leaders from various countries. The new committee will meet annually and will appoint an executive committee which will convene three times a year.

He stated that Danish churches have given \$25,000 toward reconstruction efforts and that a similar sum is being donated by the Danish government. Countries needing most relief now, he said, are Finland, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, and starvation-ridden districts of Rumania and Italy.

The World Council leader warned that "critical months" ahead and the liquidation of UNRRA indicate that material aid work will not taper off before the fall of 1947. He said the Reconstruction Department has followed a short-term policy, but must now "apply itself to long-term spiritual rehabilitation, including evangelism by new methods, such as the radio, the movies, and the press."

It was announced that Church World Service, American Protestant relief agency, has approved a \$500,000 program for refugee aid in Europe.

Frank Northam, director of the Material Aid Division of the World Council, said proposals that the Council handle parcels to Europe have been rejected after study of the problem. Those wishing to send packages to Europe, he stated, should do so through the Committee on American Remittances to Europe (CARE).

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Stresses Role of Churches in Uniting China

A major task of the Christian Church in China is to help create "a strong, united, democratic nation," Dr. Y. C. Tu, President of St. John's University in Shanghai, declared at the first postwar conference of the National Christian Council of China held in Shanghai. He spoke before 130 delegates representing 25 Protestant denominations in the country.

"We find China divided more deeply than ever before," Dr. Tu said, "and economic and health conditions are worse than at any time in the immediate past, even during the war period. Illiteracy and civil strife are among other obstacles to a united and strong China."

"However, the struggle for freedom and democracy is not without hopeful signs. The Christian movement has demonstrated its vitality. China is no longer anti-Christian, but is finding in the driving force of Christianity the most fruitful source of spiritual power. Meanwhile, the church, itself, must continue to set an example of unity, strength, and democracy." (RNS)

Authors in This Issue

W. Banning is Professor of Sociology at Leiden University and leader of the Religious Socialist Group of Bentveld. He is also editor of the weekly, "Tijd en Taak."

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Bonhoeffer Fund

Contributors to our Dietrich Bonhoeffer Fund will be glad to know that the fund is providing security for the Bonhoeffer family, including his aged father and mother and their eleven orphaned grandchildren. The fund is being dispersed at the rate of \$50.00 per month through the Church World Service. Mr. Niebuhr was able to visit the family during his recent visit in Germany, and was asked to express their gratitude to all the American donors.

Thanks . . .

Our mailed appeal to the subscribers of *Christianity and Crisis* for contributions to our subsidy fund, required to assure the continuance of our journal, has met with a wide and generous response beyond all our expectations. The response has assured the future of our journal and we express our gratitude to all donors. We will give a fuller account of our whole situation in the next issue, and make a more adequate acknowledgment of the generosity and support of our many friends.